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## **Trina Johnson of Cuddles Daycare Honored at Grace Hill Women's Business Center Wall of Fame Ceremony**

**ST. LOUIS** - I'm so thrilled," said Trina Johnson about her nomination for the Women's Business Center's Wall of Fame. Johnson's daycare center, Cuddles Daycare, has recently completed a move to a larger facility, after being in business for nine years. She took advantage of the opportunity to upgrade when a larger building became available.

Johnson is no stranger to taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. Born n East St. Louis, she graduated from Lincoln High School in 1975. After moving to St. Louis in 1980, she made up her mind that child daycare was the field for her. "I like kids and I communicate well with children, so I decided to educate myself and go into the business," she said. She attended St. Louis Community College at Forest Park, taking courses in early childhood education, and graduating in 2000 with an associates degree and certification. Her south city daycare center is licensed for 75 children from six weeks to 12 years of age employing 10 full-time teachers, all of whom have certification.

The Grace Hill Women's Business Center offered Trina Johnson other opportunities. Johnson learned that she could apply for grant money for expansion. She applied and received funds to buy equipment and supplies for her new center.

"I have met so many nice people over there at the WBC," Johnson said. "And I have taken advantage of the opportunity to attend workshops, complete a business plan and go to a lot of awards ceremonies. Now it's me being honored and I am just thrilled to death!"

"I just can't say enough for the very professional people I have met at the WBC. They acknowledge and honor people like me who have businesses here. They make it known that we are members contributing to the enrichment of our community. I had not thought about myself in that way before and it makes me feel good."

Johnson belongs to an entrepreneurial family. Her husband, Gary, owns and manages Gary's Fine Foods, a restaurant next to the Fox Theatre. He also owns a contracting business. Their two younger sons, ages 19 and 17, participate in Gary's businesses. "I run Cuddles Daycare myself and try to help him, too," she concluded.

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